

# Planners Plot an End to Business Signs

Major changes in a city law which would effectively eliminate most of the business signs now located in the city within three years will be considered by the Torrance Planning Commission May 10.

The commission has called a special meeting to discuss the proposed changes, being recommended by an Ad Hoc Sign Committee which has had the matter under study for more than a year.

Despite the wide ranging effects of the proposed law, virtually no opposition has been voiced.

Key provision in the new law is an abatement procedure which would require the removal of all signs which do

not meet the criteria established by the new ordinance. All such signs would have to be removed within three years after the law takes effect.

All permanent signs which meet criteria established by the proposed new law would be subject to approval by the city's planning director. His decision could be appealed, through a new Sign Review Committee, to the city's Planning Commission.

Major provisions of the new ordinance would:

- Eliminate all rotating signs, all signs with flashing lights, and all moving parts on signs.
- Prohibit ground signs

(also called pole signs) at any business establishment which does not have at least 200 feet of street frontage.

• Permit only one such ground sign on any one street in large shopping centers, (Del Amo Center, for example, would be entitled to one sign on Carson Street, one on Hawthorne Boulevard, and one sign on Sepulveda Boulevard.)

• Prohibit so-called projecting signs on property with less than 100 feet of street frontage and prohibit any projecting sign from extending higher than the roof of the business establishment.

• Permit roof signs only on buildings which are at

least 35 feet high. (Such signs could extend only 15 feet above the roof line.)

The ordinance would eliminate flags, banners, and other similar devices except for a 30-day period during the firm's initial opening. Realtors would be permitted to place four flags on property being shown, but off-site flags and directional signs would be prohibited.

The Ad Hoc Committee also has recommended that sufficient employees be hired by the city to strictly enforce the provisions of the proposed ordinance.

Generally, the area of a permanent sign would be determined by a formula which

permits one square foot of total sign area per face for each front foot of property, feet per side.

In several specific cases, a to a maximum of 300 square maximum area of less than 300 feet would be established in the ordinance. Signs mounted on poles could not extend higher than 25 feet into the air.

The billboard provisions in the proposed law would effectively "eliminate all billboards in Torrance," a report prepared for the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, had declared.

The report, given to Chamber directors last week, was prepared by Gerald L. Alter,

a realtor, director of the Chamber, and member of the city's Planning Commission.

Alter noted that little opposition to the proposed ordinance had been heard in the past 18 months. Sign companies have voiced opposition to the new law, he said, but businessmen in the city have said little.

"The proponents believe this to be approval," Alter said in the report to the Chamber, "but I believe it to be ignorance of the fine print."

Alter said he believes the new ordinance will eliminate "a majority of the present pole signs, projecting signs, and roof signs — at least as

far as the small businessman is concerned."

"Downtown Torrance and Hawthorne Boulevard in Welteria may look better without projecting signs," Alter added, "but the vacant stores may overshadow any improvement."

Chamber directors took no formal action on Alter's report, but voted to distribute the report to all businessmen in the city.

The new regulations were the result of a study into a "jungle of signs" which presently exist along the eastern side of Hawthorne Boulevard immediately north of Torrance Boulevard.

Torrance

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SHOW ART OBJECTS . . . Art students at South High School are displaying works which they have completed during the past semester in an Art Show which opened Monday at the school. Displaying some of their works are (at left) Spencer Durst, 16, and Wendy Rimar, 15. Looking on are Mrs. John Heglin, president of the South High PTA, and Joseph Hooten, an art teacher at the school. (Press-Herald Photo)

## City Workers Win Pay, Fringe Boosts

Torrance city employees last night were given a \$500,000 pay increase which also includes a longevity plan and full payment of employee premiums for a health insurance program.

Under the plan approved by City Councilmen, employees will get a 3 per cent across-the-board salary increase which is retroactive to last Jan. 1. In addition, a 2½ per cent increase will be given all employees on Jan. 1, 1968.

Councilmen also said they will not discuss salary increases with employees again until the budget for fiscal 1968-69 is considered.

TOTAL COST of the salary package, including the longevity program, will be \$553,000, it was reported. Of that total, \$121,000 will come from the current city budget.

The longevity program provides that all employees with 21 or more years of service as of July 1, 1967, will get a 2½ per cent salary increase. On Jan. 1, 1968, all employees who have 14 or more years of service will get a 2½ per cent increase. An additional 2½ per cent increase will be given all em-

ployees who have 7 or more years of service on July 1, 1968.

Effect of the plan will be to provide a 5 per cent bonus for employees 14 or more years of service and a 7½ per cent bonus for those employees with 21 or more years of service when it becomes fully effective.

EMPLOYEE groups had asked for a longevity plan which would provide 5, 10, and 15 per cent bonus on the 5th, 12th, and 19th anniversaries.

Last night's action by the council, approved by a 6-1 vote, ended several months of negotiations which began late last year. City Manager Edward J. Ferraro initially recommended that city employees be given no wage increases this year.

IN OTHER action last night, the council:

• Adopted, on first reading, an ordinance redefining the Torrance City Code. Principal changes involve rearrangement of the code.

• Conducted a canvass of the returns from the April 18 special municipal election and declared those returns

official. Mrs. Pauline (Polly) Watts and Dr. Kurt Shery were re-elected to the Board of Education and the city's \$2.35 million library bond issue was approved by a 4-to-1 margin.

• Approved a precise plan of development for a foundry to be located between 212th and 213th streets in the downtown Torrance area. A parking variance also was approved for the firm.

• Continued until May 23 a hearing on a proposed (See PAY HIKE on A-3)

## Thomas Solicits Opinions On Withholding Tax Issue

Opinions at the grassroots level on the controversial withholding plans for the payment of state income taxes were solicited this week by Assemblyman Vincent Thomas of the 68th District.

Writing in his weekly newsletter to constituents in his Harbor Area district, Thomas outlined the arguments which have been put forth for and

By JERRY REYNOLDS

Press-Herald City Editor

A group of North Torrance residents who have fought the city's so-called forced housing inspection program for the past three months won a new round last night.

But city officials quickly warned that the fight may not yet be ended.

Torrance councilmen voted to adopt an amendment to the city's Uniform Housing Code which severely restricts the right of entry after City Clerk Vernon Coil told them some 6,500 valid signatures had been collected by homeowners.

COIL SAID an initiative petition had sufficient signatures to place the amendment on the ballot at the next general election — due in April, 1968 — but fell short of the number required for a special election.

Homeowners, however, would have 10 days to secure the additional signatures — some 1,200 Coil told the council.

Edward Kessler, of 4170 W. 172nd St., told councilmen homeowners would go out and get the additional signatures if it became necessary.

"WE WOULD like to recommend that the city council accept the petition and vote it in," Kessler declared, "rather than force the issue."

"I think you know," he added, "that we can get the extra signatures."

City Attorney Stanley Remelmeyer, in a legal opin-

ion on the initiative petition, told councilmen they could:

• Order an ordinance prepared amending the city's Uniform Housing Code as requested in the petitions.

• Order resolutions prepared placing the petition on the ballot at the next regular municipal election.

• Refuse to act on grounds that the petition was invalid.

• Do nothing and wait until homeowners had made an attempt to secure the additional signatures.

REMELEYER said the ordinance which the petition seeks to amend may not be subject to the initiative procedure. He also ruled that the proposed amendment is invalid because it conflicts with both the state elections code and the State Housing Law and because "it would violate a fundamental state and federal policy."

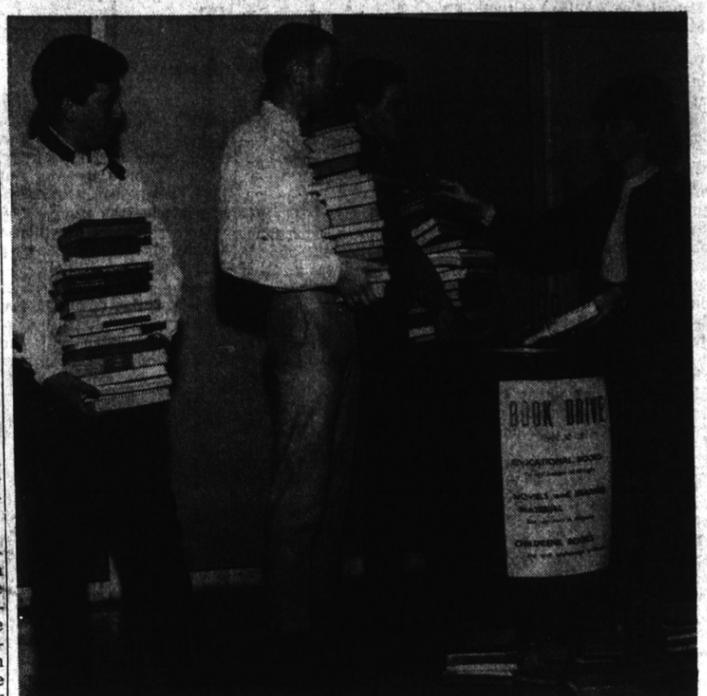
Mayor Albert Isen took issue with Remelmeyer, noting that action by the city council is presumed to be valid on its face. Isen said he had no doubts that additional signatures could be secured and that the measure would eventually be forced on to a vote of the people.

Declaring he was "willing to take the bull by the horns," Isen asked that the council order an ordinance prepared which would amend the Uniform Housing Code.

THE AMENDMENT would permit an inspector to enter a home or other private build-

## Residents Win Major Round in Housing War

### Council Orders New Ordinance On Home Check



'ROUND THE WORLD . . . Books currently being collected by students at El Camino College will be shipped to three remote areas of the world. Delivering the books to Sharon Schultz are (from left) Alex Arayan, Ed McGrath, and Ed Greaser. Books and magazines collected during the drive will be sent to the American Institute in Ethiopia, to an orphanage in Culiacan, Mexico, and to American soldiers in the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam.

## Promotional Test Slated For Chief

Torrance's next fire chief will be a man already working in the Torrance Fire Department.

City Councilmen ruled that a civil service examination to name a new fire chief will be given on a promotional basis last night. No date for the examination was established.

In acting, councilmen upheld action by the city's Civil Service Commission which voted unanimously to limit the examination to men now employed by the Torrance Fire Department.

## On Honor Roll

Richard D. Parker, son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel W. Parker of Rialto, Calif., has been named to the President's Honor Roll at Rice University. Parker is a graduate of North High School.

## Army Man Dies in Vietnam ---

Army Pfc. Kenneth R. Borick, whose wife, Frances, lives here at 263 W. 235th St., was one of eight U. S. military men from Southern California whose death in Vietnam was reported Monday by the Department of Defense. The announcement said only that Borick died in action. His death was the 15th from this area in the Asian war, the tenth in 1967.

## County Rejects 'Puff' Aid ---

A request for an \$8,000 contribution from the Board of Supervisors to help defray costs of staging the Powder Puff Derby events here was rejected by the supervisors yesterday. The presentation before the board was made by Mayor Albert Isen; Lee Center, chairman of the Los Angeles County Airport Committee; and Joe Doss, chairman of the Powder Puff Derby Terminus Committee. Supervisors rejected a motion offered by Burton W. Chace for the funds, citing the precedent-setting nature of the request. The city and the airport is providing the major portion of the funds for the event.

## Cyclist Killed on Freeway ---

Twenty-four-year-old Richard L. Hoffens, an airman at Los Alamitos Naval Air Station, died on the San Diego Freeway near Artesia early Tuesday after his cycle slammed into the rear of a car moving in the slow lanes about 50 miles an hour. Highway Patrol officers estimated Hoffens' speed at 70 mph when he hit the southbound car about 6:15 a.m. Tuesday. Patrolman reported that the airman had been cited just a week ago for speeding in about the same location where he died.